

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WOMACK ARMY MEDICAL CENTER
Fort Bragg, North Carolina 28310

MEDCEN Memorandum
No. 525-2

09 November 2004

Military Operations
Adverse Weather Operations and
Adverse Weather Emergency Employees

1. PURPOSE.

a. To prescribe command policy for declaring certain Womack Army Medical Center (WAMC) personnel as adverse weather emergency employees for adverse weather operations.

b. To identify adverse weather emergency employees and mission essential tasks during severe weather situations. This memorandum also delineates procedures and responsibilities for reporting to work in the absence of official instructions or chain of command notification.

2. APPLICABILITY. This memorandum applies:

a. To all assigned WAMC personnel to include outlying clinics. Volunteers and Red Cross personnel are encouraged to follow installation announcements.

b. During periods of adverse weather, which is defined as an event that may cause hazardous conditions at work and while driving to and from work. Adverse weather conditions for the Fort Bragg geographic area include; but not limited to hurricanes, snow, ice, earthquakes, and tornadoes.

c. During an official declaration of a post closing or the potential of the post closing.

3. DEFINITIONS.

a. **Adverse Weather Emergency Employees** are those personnel that must be present for duty to continue and sustain facility and clinical operations for a period of 24-72 hours. All Adverse Weather Emergency Employees must be prepared to remain at their duty location for up to 24 hours, possibly more, depending upon the weather conditions situation. After due written notification the following personnel are considered mission essential:

(1) All military personnel.

(2) All physicians and physician assistants.

(3) All registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, and certified nursing assistants.

*This memorandum supersedes MEDCEN Memo 525-2, dated 20 February 2002.

(4) All Department of Emergency Medical personnel to include ambulance personnel.

(5) All ancillary personnel, as designated by the employee's supervisor, needed to maintain the operation of the Medical Center.

- (6) The Public Affairs Officer.
- (7) The Safety Officer.
- (8) The Physical Security Specialist.
- (9) The Plans and Operations Officer.

(10) Other civilian employees responsible for accomplishing medical operations, food service operations, maintenance operations and housekeeping duties as designated by the employee's supervisor.

b. Although personnel listed in paragraph 3a. above are all considered Adverse Weather Mission Essential personnel, supervisors may release individuals if they are not needed to sustain all facility and clinical operations for 24 hours. Personnel releases should be coordinated with the Deputy Chief Nurse and Deputy Commander for Clinical Services or their designee.

c. The following constitutes "baseline" emergency operational requirements necessary to operate WAMC as a primary patient receiving site during periods of adverse weather. The staffing for the functions listed below are considered to be present for duty until relieved by proper authority. The department/directorate chief will review staffing needs with applicable Deputy Commander prior to dismissing personnel.

(1) Department of Emergency Medicine (DEM) will continue to provide 24 hour Emergency Department and EMS service. DEM Chief and DEM Head Nurse will confer with DCCS and DCN in assuring that DEM personnel are recalled and released consistent with the need to provide services for the duration of the event. Staffing levels will be determined based on event conditions and anticipated needs.

(2) As the situation dictates, at least one Surgical Suite, with necessary staff, as determined by the Department of Surgery and Nursing.

(3) Those personnel required to maintain occupied, sustain occupied, and potentially expand wards and inpatient areas, as designated by Assistant Chief Nurse or Evening/Night Supervisor.

(4) Radiology may operate with reduced staffing, as determined by the Chief, Department of Radiology, after finalizing necessary support to the Emergency Room (ER), Intensive Care Unit (ICU), and other direct patient care areas.

(5) Laboratory - Laboratory may operate with reduced staffing as determined by the Chief, Department of Pathology to maintain clinical pathology operations and to keep the Outpatient Collections Lab open. In the absence of adequate staffing, the Chief, Department of Pathology may curtail operations of the Outpatient Collections Lab.

(6) Pharmacy may operate with reduced staffing, as determined by the Chief, Department of Pharmacy after finalizing necessary support to the ER, OR and inpatient areas.

(7) Logistics Division may operate with reduced staffing, as determined by the Chief, Logistics Division after finalizing critical maintenance and service support requirements.

(8) Dining Facility may operate with reduced staffing, as determined by the Chief, Nutrition Care Division after finalizing nutritional requirements/support for patients and staff.

(9) Certain patient administrative areas may operate with reduced staffing, as determined by the Chief, Patient Administration Division after administrative support requirements are met.

(10) Emergency Operations Center (EOC), on order, or as determined by Chief, Plans, Training, Mobilization, and Security Division (PTM&S), will operate in shifts supplemented by designated staff from Personnel, Patient Administration, and Logistics Divisions. See Emergency Management Plan.

(11) Housekeeping Services may operate with reduced staffing, as determined by the Logistics Division's Contracting Officer Representative, to ensure support to ER, OR, inpatient units and other clinical areas.

4. POLICY.

a. The Fort Bragg Commander has the responsibility for determining if and when the installation closes. The XVIII Airborne Corps Operations Center is the authority for disseminating base closing information. Commander, WAMC may comply with installation guidance as best possible after considering the needs of the beneficiary population, inpatients, the safety of both staff and patients, and to ensure the continuity of care.

b. The authority for declaring Adverse Weather Emergency operations and activating the adverse weather emergency employees' requirements rest with the Commander, Fort Bragg and/or designated representative. The WAMC EOC, if activated, is the authority for disseminating weather condition warnings - this information will be consistent with XVIII Airborne Corps messages. If the EOC has not been activated, the Chief, PTM&S, in consultation with the command group, is the authority for disseminating emergency operation orders, adverse weather emergency personnel requirements, the release of non-essential personnel, reducing or closing patient services, reducing or reassigning the staff, and other emergency or closure information.

c. During adverse weather conditions, departments/divisions /services/ activities will continue to operate regardless of installation instructions, but will be prepared to follow shut-down/closing instructions from the command group or the EOC. On order, the department/ division/ service/ activity chief will execute closure procedures in an orderly manner and will make status reports to the EOC, as required. See paragraph 6, Administrative Instructions.

d. During adverse weather conditions, all outlying clinics (Robinson, Clark, and Joel Clinics, and Preventive Medicine) will close on order of the WAMC Commander or designated representative. When clinics are closed those personnel may be required to provide coverage/staffing at WAMC. In the absence of command instructions, follow the Fort Bragg EOC and/or TV/radio instructions.

e. All military personnel are Adverse Weather Emergency Employees. Military personnel residing on-post with pre-assigned adverse weather duties will remain at their duty section or report back to their duty section. Those military personnel without pre-assigned emergency duties will report to their immediate supervisor or the Administrative Officer of the Day (AOD) where soldiers may be assigned a detail, as required for the situation. All military personnel residing off-post will make every attempt to report to

duty. Every effort must be made to maintain contact with one's chain of command.

f. While at home. In the event of electrical power loss or a loss in telephone communications during adverse weather conditions, Adverse Weather Emergency Employees will make every attempt to report back to work consistent with one's normal duty hours unless otherwise directed by public safety officials, police, or TV/radio instructions. Every effort must be made to maintain contact with one's chain of authority. However, if personal safety is in jeopardy, DO NOT ATTEMPT TO REPORT FOR WORK. Notify your chain of command immediately.

g. Employees who have been designated as Adverse Weather Emergency Employees are required to provide written directions to their residence along with a strip map which includes the street address (post offices box addresses are unacceptable) and telephone number. Adverse Weather Emergency Employees are required to keep the strip map, address and telephone number current.

h. Adverse Weather Emergency Employees who are also Bargaining Unit Employees are required to comply with all the provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement as it relates to the duties and responsibilities of Adverse Weather Essential Employees

i. Civilian personnel who refuse to acknowledge their designation as Adverse Weather Emergency Employees may be reassigned or terminated. Designation as adverse weather emergency employees does not entitle additional pay or special privileges.

5. NOTIFICATION AND RECALL INSTRUCTIONS.

a. Adverse Weather.

(1) Follow normal internal procedures for notification and recall instructions. Refer to the Emergency Management Plan for general guidance. Prior to releasing personnel, supervisors will validate phone numbers and beeper/pager methods for recall. Supervisors will ensure strip maps are on hand for all Adverse Weather Emergency Employees residing off post.

(2) The Post will notify the WAMC AOD who in turn will notify the evening/night supervisor. The AOD or the EOC (if activated) is responsible for notifying the command group. Upon command determination, the AOD will alert and issue recall instructions as the need and situation warrants. If weather conditions deteriorate so that staff recalls may not be readily forthcoming, the AOD will issue necessary instructions, in coordination with the evening/night nursing supervisors, for present for duty personnel to prepare to stay on duty until properly relieved.

b. Adverse Weather during weekends, holidays, or during other periods of normally reduced staffing. In addition to the above instructions, the AOD or senior officer will implement complete hospital-wide notification per AOD instructions. In the absence of the Public Affairs Officer, all avenues for public service announcements must be utilized. This may include requesting radio and TV public service announcements through the installation EOC.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS.

a. All department/division/service/activity chiefs will:

(1) Designate in writing civilian adverse weather emergency employees (as defined in paragraph 3.a) by memorandum or update the job description. Coordinate with Chief, Human Resources Branch for specific requirements and provide list to AOD (see attached memo).

(2) Maintain current internal alert rosters to include Adverse Weather Emergency civilian employees. Provide copies of alert rosters and strip maps for civilian and military adverse weather emergency employees to the Civilian Human Resources Branch and Troop Commander, respectively.

b. Supervisors will ensure employees are provided with contingency instructions (buddy system; alternate means of transportation, e.g. 4-wheel drive owners; etc.) in case of unsafe travel conditions, electrical outages, phone outages, and other conditions that may delay normal reporting times.

c. Chief, Human Resources Branch will effect and maintain documentation for Adverse Weather Emergency Civilian Employees.

d. Chief, Human Resources Branch will publish and update overtime rules.

e. Department/division/services/activity chiefs will ensure that Uniform Chart of Accounts, Personnel Report System (UCAPERS) time sheets reflect proper codes as per Medical Command Medical Expense and Performance Reports guidance. Resource Management Division will review UCAPERS data to ensure compliance.

f. Department/division/services/activity chiefs prepare an implementing standard operating procedure (SOP) to support this memorandum. In addition, exercise the SOP as part of the internal training schedule.

g. Upon declaration that adverse weather operations have commenced and Adverse Weather Emergency Employees requirements are implemented, normal overtime/compensatory rules apply.

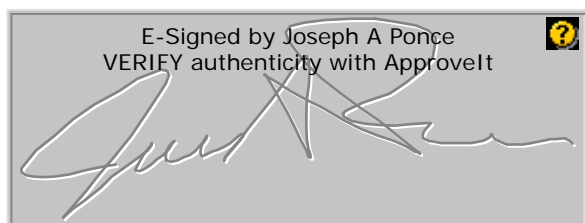
h. Should a MASCAL occur during adverse weather WAMC will revert to the Code Yellow procedures.

The proponent of this publication is the Plans, Training, Mobilization, and Security Division. Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements directly to the proponent on a DA Form 2028, RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO PUBLICATIONS AND BLANK FORMS.

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